

STATE SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENT (SSP) PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the SSP Program?

The 2002 Washington State Legislature enacted changes in the way the state's portion of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is distributed. Small payments of between \$5-\$25 to approximately 90,000 people were eliminated. Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) was directed to convert program dollars formerly authorized as services to cash grants so that individuals and their families or guardians could purchase needed services directly.

What services will be covered by SSP grants?

These grants will be used to pay for a variety of services such as residential services, Family Support Program services, Voluntary Placement Program services, and transition services.

Who is eligible for an SSP cash grant?

Eligibility is determined by DDS based on several factors. Since the SSP is related to the SSI benefit, a person must have been eligible for an SSI cash benefit in March 2002 and currently be eligible for an SSI cash benefit. Persons must also be receiving certain programmatic services that have previously been funded with DDS state dollars.

How will someone know if he or she is eligible for an SSP cash grant?

Persons identified by DDS as eligible for an SSP cash grant will receive:

- An *Eligibility Checklist* that determines eligibility for SSP; and
- A *Change of Service Notification* letter, which provides information about what provider payment(s) are being terminated, how much money will be received monthly as an SSP cash grant, and the date the SSP payment begins.

In what form will SSP payments be made to persons?

Payments will be made in the form of a monthly check issued at the beginning of each month of service for as long as a person is eligible. The first mailing of SSP warrants or checks began in August 2002 for payment for September services. The checks will be issued to the person's Representative Payee or Protective Payee. If a person does not have a Representative Payee or Protective Payee, the check will be issued directly to the person.

How much money will each person receive?

This varies by individual and will be determined by DDS. This will be specified in the *Change of Service Notification* letter.

Will SSP affect resources for SSI eligibility?

SSP, if retained by the person, is considered to be a resource on the first day of the month following the month the check is received. For example, if the SSP is received at the end of August for September services, it will be counted as a resource on September 1st.

Are there restrictions on the use of SSP money?Residential Services

If the state dollars have been paying for residential or related services, the SSP payment must be used to purchase those services from a licensed or DDS certified provider. If the state dollars have been paying for a client allowance due to insufficient income, the SSP payment must be used to pay for basic needs such as rent, food, and utilities.

Alternative Living or Companion Home

If the state dollars have been paying for Alternative Living or Companion Home services from a DDS contracted provider, the SSP payment must be used to purchase those services from an individual contracted with DDS to provide those services.

Voluntary Placement Program (VPP)

If the state dollars have been paying for residential services, the SSP payment must be used to purchase those services from a licensed foster or group care provider. If an individual is 18-21 years of age and still in the VPP, the services must be purchased from a certified DDS residential provider. Other VPP services must be purchased from a licensed, certified, or contracted provider.

Family Support Program

There are no restrictions on the use of Family Support SSP money.

Transition Employment/Day Program

Individuals must develop a plan with their DDS case resource manager to identify what services they need, and use their SSP to purchase a day program such as employment, community access, person-to-person or individual and family services from a county or county -contracted employment or day program provider.

Can a person choose not to participate in the SSP program?

An individual may refuse the SSP, but SSP eligible individuals will not be eligible to receive traditional state services from DDS.

What happens if someone does not use SSP money as required by DDS?

If it is determined that an SSP payment was not used to purchase services as required by DDS, SSP payments will stop and DDS will initiate action to recover the funds. The person will be expected to repay DDS.

Who do I call if I have questions?

Please call your DDS case resource manager or social worker if you have additional questions.

If you are receiving SSP for Family Support and have tax questions, please see the IRS website at www.irs.gov.